

1 Rural School Days.

April 29 1954

That I remembered most about my rural school days, where the poor teacher always had children that could not speak a word of English. Children ~~came~~ came from German Bohemians, Polish and Swedish speaking families. There was lots of crying from frighten 5 and 6 years old tots. Usually there were average of 30 to 40 children ranges from age of 5 to 16 years, even a couple older boy. Teacher taught all eight grades and <sup>always</sup> 3 or 4 could not speak English and ~~many~~ of us who could, done very poorly at the beginning of each year.

Older boys would give the teacher lot of trouble they would be taller and stronger than the teacher, but somehow she would handle them very well. They would <sup>put</sup> a frog or snake in her desk or hang the younger boys by ~~their~~ overalls on the hooks in cloakroom. Poor little tykes could not get down, as ~~their~~ feet dangled ~~at~~ 6 in above the floor, until the teacher got ~~them~~ <sup>him</sup> down.

He sat 3 in one seat, remembered one of little girls wet her pants, it ran down on seat and all



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three <sup>just</sup> girls had wet pants and dresses, of course the little girl did not admit, which one had the accident so all three of us were wet and laugh at from the other children, we finally dried out, but did not smell too pleasant.

We always look forward to Halloween and Christmas programs. Last two weeks, before the program, we missed classes to practice for our parts. Boys would bring the wire and girls bring sheets for the curtains, boys make stage. Day before the program, we rehearse our parts in full crepe paper costumes, <sup>on</sup> stage + drawing of the curtain. Day of the program, at noon we were sent home to get ready for the big nite. Our hair in "rag curlers or rebraided" a new dress, boys new shirt + clean pants.

Big nite arrive, we were all excited, nervous, ready to perform for our parents, grandparents, smaller brothers and sisters. The way they applauded us you think we were the best actors and actresses. After the program, Santa arrived with his bag over his shoulder, bring us each a <sup>big</sup> sack full



of Candy nuts and apple or orange (purchased by the teacher and school board), even our smaller sisters received a <sup>smaller</sup> bag. Arrived home about 10 o'clock after my father unharnessed the team, came to the house, we sat around the table and enjoy treats. ~~we were~~ ~~we were~~ ~~but~~ ~~happy~~ ~~but~~ ~~happy~~. Very tired, ~~but~~ but happy.

Children walked to school from  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles. One very cold morning, <sup>girl about 10 years old</sup> arrived to school crying, the <sup>teacher</sup> rub her feet with snow, but she cried harder, rest of us cried too. Teacher asked us if we behave, she would walk to a farmer near the school about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile away. He came with the team + sleigh taken the little girl home about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles. She was in hospital for a month. She didn't ~~Whenever I think of her~~ come back to school until spring, her legs were scarred + dark as if she burnt them.

Whenever I think her, how that poor child suffer, they lived 7 miles from town. No care those days, she wasn't taken to doctor until the following <sup>day</sup>. How long that poor girl

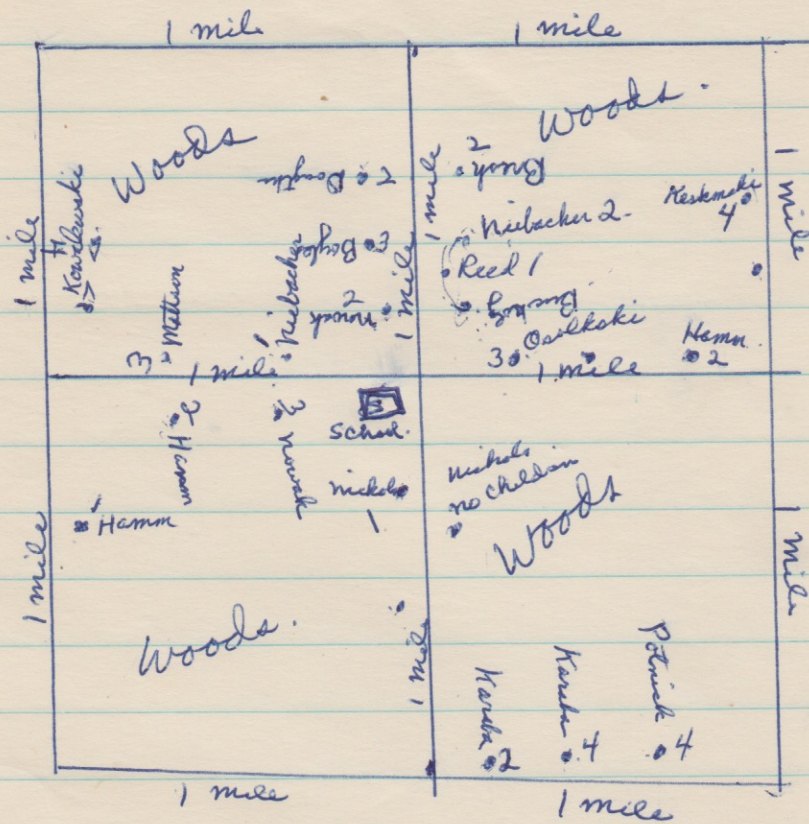


had suffer.

School house was very cold, our lunches frozen as we walked to school. Teacher placed out lunch pails under the stove. If we had soup mashed potatoes or pancakes in jars, she would set the jars in pan of water on top the jacket-covered pot belly stove. Never had any fresh fruit in winter time.

Running out to the two holes in winter time and with the crisp cold ~~pages~~<sup>pages</sup> from the Sears Roebuck catalog was an experience. No wonder there so <sup>many</sup> wet pants. There are ~~to~~ not too <sup>many</sup> many Sears Roebuck Catalog to be found, <sup>now days</sup> there are very valuable today. Just think and we used that expensive toilet paper.





22 small farms ~~22~~.



## Schools.

How the teachers carried 2 gallon pails of milk to school every morning for the children's lunches. How mother furnished bones and vegetables, so the teacher could stay till 6 o'clock at night and start cooking up a nourishing stew, that would finish simmering in time for the next day's hot lunch.

How on better cold days lunch buckets were set in a wash boiler of hot water on the stove to thaw out. How on wet days and the wettest children were placed nearest to the stove to dry out. How some mothers literally sewed their youngsters into long underwear early in winter, --- and how they smelled, a "bit" strong as time went on.

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In my days, winter months, dinner pails would be placed under the stove to thaw. Most of children would bring soup, mashed potatoes, pancakes, stew, some - canned soups would be placed in pan of hot water on top of jacket. Covered stove. No fresh fruit during winter months, would be frozen by child come to school. As some children walked  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to  $1\frac{3}{4}$  miles. A. V.

(over)



Remember when Karaba girl came to school, with frozen legs & feet. She was crying, so rest of the children. Teacher send one of oldest boys to my uncle's place about 1/4 mile from school. Child was taken home, it wasn't until next day, she was taken to doctor (sled & horses) put in hospital for long time. Remember how ~~black~~ black scars, in time black fell off, her legs showed scars. Often I recall the incident, and shudder, how poor child suffered so long. A. U.

Also recall how my sister (Bernice) put her tongue on the swing bar in dead of winter. We got teachers to help. Can not recall what was done to loosen her tongue. A. U.

When I started, did not understand a single word of the English language. Must ~~also~~ admit that Rural School was great help. My first three years in Owen elementary was very hard. A. U.